

Tom Horne
Superintendent

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ARIZONA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

For more information contact Amy Rezzonico, Press Secretary (602) 542-5460

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Thursday, September 13, 2007

Federal Rules Prohibit Nonstandard Accommodations for Statewide Tests

PHOENIX (Thursday, September 13, 2007) – There have been news stories about schools not making adequate yearly progress because students with nonstandard accommodations – especially the use of calculators on the math test – are to be counted as not taking the test. State Superintendent Tom Horne stated: “This is a federal rule. Now the federal government is saying that special education students may not use these accommodations on statewide or district-wide tests.”

Horne added: “This also is a federal ruling, and does not reflect any decisions made by state officials.”

A copy of a memo from Superintendent Tom Horne to districts and charter schools conveying this information is attached.

The Arizona Department of Education has submitted to the United States Department of Education (USDOE) a request that use of calculators on mathematics tests be classified as a standard accommodation. This request was supported by a scientific study. No answer has yet been received from the USDOE.

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<http://www.ade.az.gov/standards/aims/Administering/TestingAccommodations2007-08.pdf>



State of Arizona

Department of Education

Tom Horne
Superintendent of
Public Instruction

MEMORANDUM

TO: Superintendents, Charter School Operators, Special Education Directors, and Test Coordinators

FROM: Superintendent Tom Horne

DATE: September 11, 2007

RE: Please Don't Shoot the Messenger

The following revision to IDEA § 300.160(b)(2) appeared in the *Federal Register* for April 9, 2007:

The State's (or, in the case of a district-wide assessment, the LEA's) guidelines must—

- (i) Identify only those accommodations for each assessment that do not invalidate the score; and
- (ii) Instruct IEP Teams to select, for each assessment, only those accommodations that do not invalidate the score.

As you let people know about this, please make it clear to them that this is not a decision by the state, but a requirement of the federal government.

We have submitted a request to the U.S. Department of Education (USDOE) to classify the use of calculators as a standard accommodation. We submitted a scientific study in support of that request. As soon as we hear from the USDOE, we will let you know.